

Animal Control By-law Review Working Group: Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 21 November 2017 at 4:30 p.m.
Falstaff Room, 2nd Floor, 82 Erie Street Stratford

Meeting Called By: Ed Dujlovic, Director of Infrastructure and Development Services

Note taker: Stephanie Potter, Policy and Research Associate

Members Present: Ken Wood, Maxine Watson, Sharon Morrice, Pamela Bartlett, Kimberly Kempen, Kathrin Delutis, Kathy Innocente

Regrets: Christopher Koslowski

1.0 Review minutes of previous meetings

The Working Group noted revisions to the 11 October 2017 meeting minutes. The minutes will be revised and reconsidered at the next meeting.

2.0 Review current Animal Control Contract

2.1 The working group suggested following updates/amendments to the numbered sections of the Bylaw:

- 1.1 include wildlife in the definition of animal;
- 2.0 Change "Animal Control Services" to "Animal Services;"
- 2.18 if approved, will have to be changed from ID tags to microchips;
- 3.2 revise the wording;
- 3.4 and 3.9 contradict each other – 3.4 says 1 hour; 3.9 says 2 hours;
- 3.4 revise the wording;
- 3.9 revise, should not just apply to roads, should apply to any injured animal in the municipality; and would like the response time to be shorter (i.e. – 1 hour instead of 2 hours);
- Schedule "A" add the Pound Act and the OSPCA Act.
- Education programming/responsible pet ownership programming should also be discussed during negotiations

2.2 The following questions were asked and answered:

- Why these contracts are renewed every 5 years?
 - Most contracts are negotiated and renewed over 5 year terms.
- Are noise complaints needed in this contract?
 - We look to the Humane Society to resolve animal noise complaints because it is an animal-related issue.
- Will the animal control bylaw officer reside in Stratford?
 - Yes, they do at present and they work out of the Stratford facility, and are currently in training as an OSPCA Officer (t present an OSPCA officer comes in from Kitchener to handle those issues);
 - It was noted that this is good information to share on the City website.
- Can we extend the amount of time allowed before euthanasia when a stray animal is taken in at the humane society (ie – longer than 72 hours)?
 - The Humane Society rarely euthanizes animals, the rate is less than 6% in Stratford and it is only carried out as a last resort;
 - There is almost no chance an animal will be euthanized after 72 hours at the shelter in this community;
 - Typically euthanasia is only carried out in the case of severe injury or suffering;
 - The Humane Society will not perform owner-requested euthanasia.
- How does the Humane Society determine when to euthanize?
 - Humane Society staff will meet with vets to discuss all options; every animal deserves a conversation;
 - Reports on these conversations and decisions are filed and can be reviewed.
- Under 4.0 are euthanasia statistics reported?
 - Yes, they are reported to the City.
- Instead of having animal bylaw officers deal with road kill, could City public works staff do it instead to free animal control officers to respond to live animal issues?
 - Staff will review this;
 - Humane society picks up approximately 75 dead animals per year; therefore this may not save much time/money.
- What qualifies as a wildlife nuisance call?
 - Humane society will come out if a wild animal is sick or injured; they do not do trapping or removal.
- Will the humane society help with the microchipping program?
 - Yes, just held a very successful clinic.

- What microchipping system does the Humane Society use?
 - 24 Hour Pet Watch.
- What happens when someone calls the Humane Society regarding a distressed animal after hours?
 - The call goes to an answering service that will page an officer to respond; someone is on call to respond to issues 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
- Can the Humane Society use Pet Point to generate a public report for the City?
 - We do not make the reports public because of the personal information in them – we will look in to making the statistics/year end compliance issues public
- Is there a way to get local animal rescues to work in coalition with each other?
 - Yes in the end their missions are the same and they do meet to discuss partnerships; they also work closely with other humane societies.
- Can residents become members of the Humane Society?
 - The Humane Society offers public membership classes;
 - Ordinary, Associate, and Jr. Memberships are \$15 annually;
 - Family memberships are \$25 annually;
 - There is no fee for honorary memberships.
- Schedule B – what sort of manpower is attached to this amount of money? How many people are accessible to Stratford?
 - The City does not specify how the service is provided; we provide the criteria that must be met in the contract, it is up to the Humane Society to meet the service levels specified;
 - Note that there is also a cost associated with keeping the animals in the shelter; it goes beyond the officers;
 - It was also noted that the level of volunteers in Stratford is high (hours are tracked).
- What is the Humane Society's position on Barn Cat programs?
 - Would love to do it if it would be effective; need more information on how to do it correctly.
- Are there any plans for a low-cost spay/neuter clinic in Stratford?
 - The Humane Society would love to have one here but the accreditation costs are too high to make it viable (at present, the surgical center can only operate on the humane societies own animals because they are not fully accredited)
- Can we include in the contract that all animals surrendered will be accepted even if the person surrendering the animal cannot pay the \$50 surrender fee?
 - It was noted that all animals surrendered are accepted regardless of the person's ability to pay the surrender fee;

- However, it was noted that this is not public knowledge and that \$50 fee deters some people from surrendering their animal.
- It was suggested that the city be responsible for covering the surrender fee for those who cannot pay:
 - It was noted that the number of surrenders would very likely increase if that were the case;
 - 135 animals were surrendered in 2016.
- It was noted that some rescues are not registered charities; some take donations and cannot give tax receipts – these organizations should be investigated.

⇒ **Action Item:** Staff will continue working with the Humane Society on the contract and the issues discussed;

⇒ **Action Item:** Include information on the services provided by the Humane Society on the City's website.

⇒ **Action Item:** Some definitions in the Animal Control Bylaw should be revised/Updated. This item was referred to the next meeting.

⇒ **Action Item:** That staff review waiving pet licensing fees in the first year that microchips are purchased.

⇒ **Motion: That the City investigates covering the cost or subsidizing the cost of the Humane Society's surrender fee.**

Carried

⇒ **Motion: That the City and the Humane Society look into including a public education program during contract negotiations.**

Carried

3.0 Responsible Pet Ownership

⇒ **Action Item:** The two attachments from Calgary should be included on the City's webpage if permission is granted from Calgary.

4.0 Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:31 pm.